

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of Study

The Independent Curriculum becomes Indonesia's latest curriculum, initiated by Nadiem Anwar Makariem, the Minister of Research, Technology, Culture, and Education. The cultivation of character education through a project in this curriculum is known as the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila (P5)). The P5 learning concept uses the method of PjBL (project-based learning), namely observing, thinking, and solving issues. The independent curriculum focuses on student freedom in choosing interests and talents in order to optimise their talents and be able to contribute to the country (Tumembouw, 2023).

Freedom of Learning focuses on freedom and creative thinking. The independent learning curriculum concept integrates reading skills, knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Fadhli, 2022). This concept allows students to think freely in order to make the most of the knowledge they need. Mabsutsah et al. (2022) pointed out that the independent curriculum is defined as a learning design that provides opportunities for students to learn in a fun, relaxed, calm, and pressure-free way and displays student talents.

The freedom referred to in the independent curriculum concept is freedom of learning, which includes conditions of independence in achieving learning objectives, methods, materials, and assessments for teachers and students. So this shows that the learning process in the independent learning curriculum is adapted to the needs of students (student-centered). The independent learning curriculum does not limit the concept of learning at school and outside of school but emphasises the creativity of teachers and students. Because learning that is monotonous or unidirectional becomes an obstacle for students to express their abilities, The limitations of the curriculum concept that has been used so far have hampered the creativity that exists in teachers and students. This is also supported by Fadli (2022), who says that the curriculum used so far shows that students must get the highest score in every subject taught at school. Meanwhile, each student has their own expertise in their field, which results in students not being creative in displaying their skills.

The deep discrepancy between the Independent Curriculum System and the prior curriculum is the project-based learning method (Syaefullah, 2022). For instance, after discussing with the teacher in class, students are assigned to make projects. In this project, students are trained to be more critical, to respond quickly to problems, and to work well together. So they can support the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (Sari & Amini, 2020).

The knowledge received by the prophets was immediately given by Allah SWT when they reached a certain level. It's the same with humans. This is obtained independently without any coercion, but there is definitely an opportunity to get it.

It is also implied in surah al-Baqarah verse 31 of the Al-Qur'an:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

صَادِقِينَ

Based on the verse above, it is related to the concept of the Independent Curriculum, namely that one of the privileges of humans is the ability to express what comes to mind and grasp language so that it leads to "knowing." This concept is useful for building will and enthusiasm, realising freedom of expression and mind, and being free from all forms of fear. Each student is expected to grow and develop according to their potential and abilities, without fear. On the other hand, the human ability to formulate ideas and give names to everything is a step towards creating knowledgeable humans and the birth of knowledge that is in accordance with their nature.

The concept of Independent learning is also contained in the hadith of Abu Hurairah:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ  
يُهَوِّدَانِهِ وَيُنَصِّرَانِهِ وَمُجَسِّسَانِهِ...

The above hadith confirms that every child has been given potential by God, is very dependent on the environment (empiricism), and has the ability to develop themselves (naturalism) to get a noble degree in carrying out life. The researcher appreciates the steps taken by the Minister of Education and Culture in removing the Science, Social, and Language classes at the high school level. This shows that we have returned to believing that education is very broad and not limited by discrediting certain potentials. We must realise that Islamic education highly values the inherent potential of humans, as we know it by the term "the concept of human nature," that every child has different potentials and talents, and the task of the teacher and education is to facilitate that potential to grow and develop according to what is in the individual. This is actually what the concept of independent learning wants, and it has been practiced in the Al-Quran and Hadith as a reference for Muslims.

The abolition of science, social sciences, and language classes was announced by the Minister of Education, Nadiem Anwar Makarim. The aim of eliminating this class is so that students can freely choose the subjects they are interested in in high school. This is also supported by educational

consultancy Ina Liem, who believes that Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem's move to eliminate the division of science, social studies, and language majors in high school is very appropriate. Because this grouping often causes many problems and is not in accordance with students' career trends, According to her, this grouping also complicates student profiles. She gave an example: there is a student who chooses the social sciences major because they avoid physics. In fact, she likes biology and has a suitable interest in the field of aquaculture. After graduating, it became difficult to find a university that would accept her in that field because she was from a social class (Kurniawan, 2022).

The benefits of the independent curriculum are that it focuses on important material and develops student competencies in simpler and deeper stages. In addition, educators and students will be more independent because students choose subjects according to their interests, talents, and aspirations. There will be no more science, social, language classes, etc. All are equal. Teachers and schools are also given the authority to manage and develop curricula according to the students attainments.

The Independent Curriculum application for learning English must be simple and not troublesome, and it should not give students certain limitations to be creative in learning English (Yusuf & Arfiansyah, 2021). The point is, students are happy to do that because it matches their interests. For instance, there is material about procedure text in nursing vocational schools. Students

are assigned to make procedure texts not necessarily about medical devices or those related to nursing, but students are given the freedom to write what they want to based on their interests (Asrah, 2022).

The challenges of implementing the independent curriculum are actually in the schools and teacher readiness. The readiness and courage of the school to dare to explore, innovate, and be creative according to the needs of the school and students so that the implementation of the Independent Curriculum can be carried out properly. Schools that are not adaptive to the times, unresponsive, and passive will only be spectators in the mire of history, and vice versa will be the winners in the Independent Curriculum (Arviansyah & Shagena, 2022).

In addition, Hasnawati (2021) analysed the implementation of an independent curriculum in Islamic subjects. The participants are teachers and senior high school students. From her research, she found that the independent curriculum uses differentiated learning by grouping lessons according to students' abilities. From that implementation, students become critical, communicate well, creative, and high-minded.

The researcher concludes from that previous study that the gaps between the previous and this current research are the subject and the school system. In previous research, the focus was on Islamic religious subjects, while in this study, the focus was on English. Besides that, the school is also based on a boarding school, where previous researchers only researched in

public schools. In addition, the school that the researcher wants to study is a school that has received the predicate of the third model driving school. The third model driving school is the school that has a good reputation for implementing an independent curriculum and no longer needs guidance or is already independent. The school also has no red notes on the report cards for the quality of education in the fields of literacy and numeracy.

This research is established to analyse the independent curriculum implementation in English at SMP Islam Terpadu Insan Madani Banjarmasin. It is hoped that by analyzing, concrete steps can be taken to help reduce challenges in learning English at school. This research examined teachers, students, and the school environment at SMP Islam Terpadu Insan Madani Banjarmasin. The investigation will begin in May 2023. Data was collected through interviews and in-class observation. As a result, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled **“AN ANALYSIS OF INDEPENDENT CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN ENGLISH SUBJECT (BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES)”**.

## **B. Definition of Key Terms**

Several terms related to the research are clarified to avoid misconceptions.

### **1. English Language Teaching**

English Language Teaching (ELT) is the process of teaching and

learning English as a second or foreign language (Nurdiana, 2015). The ELT teacher is responsible for designing and delivering subject matter that is appropriate to the student's level of English ability. They use a variety of teaching methods and strategies that aim to improve students' understanding and mastery of English. In this research, the ELT is focusing on the teaching of English skills in SMP IT Al-Madani. This research found out what types of teaching methods are used by teacher.

## 2. Independent Curriculum Implementation

The Independent Curriculum is a curriculum with various intra-curricular learning activities where the content will be more optimal so that students have enough time to explore concepts and strengthen competence. Teachers have the flexibility to choose various teaching tools so that learning can be adapted to the learning needs and interests of students (Kemendikbud, 2021). In this research, the researcher took the data about the implementation of the independent curriculum in English subjects in terms of the perspectives of teachers and students about the benefits and challenges that they experienced during teaching and learning English.

## 3. Benefit

A benefit is a positive result or advantage obtained from an action, decision, or situation. In a general context, benefit often refers to the good

impact provided, such as improved physical or mental well-being. In this research, the researcher will examine the benefits of implementing an independent curriculum from both teacher and student perspectives. It can be in the form of classroom teaching systems, evaluation techniques, or teacher teaching techniques.

#### 4. Challenge

A challenge is a situation or condition that requires effort, creativity, or adaptation to be faced or overcome. In everyday life, challenges can appear as obstacles or difficulties that require special abilities and responses. This research aims to investigate the challenges faced in implementing the independent curriculum, especially from the perspectives of teachers and students. The aspects that will be explored involve the classroom teaching system, evaluation techniques used, and teacher teaching techniques.

### **C. Research Questions**

Based on the problems described in the research background, the researcher decided to explore 3 research questions, as follows:

1. How does the teacher implement Independent Curriculum in the English subject?
2. What are the benefits of Independent Curriculum implementation in the English subject?

3. What are the challenges of Independent Curriculum implementation in the English subject?

#### **D. Objectives of Study**

According to the research questions, the research aims to analyze:

1. To find out how the teacher Implement Independent Curriculum in English subject.
2. To find out the benefits of Independent Curriculum implementation.in English subject.
3. To find out the challenges of Independent Curriculum implementation in English subject.

#### **E. Significance of Study**

This study will provide useful information to teachers, students, and researchers about the implementation of an independent curriculum, the benefits of implementing an independent curriculum, and the challenges faced by teachers and students in class.

1. For the teacher, this research is hoped to be a reference to evaluate their English teaching practices with an independent curriculum and to improve teaching skills in order to encourage students to learn English.
2. For the researcher, this research is expected to be employed as development data or literature for others in the same field.

3. For the students, they are more able to introspect themselves about their learning outcomes after implementing an independent curriculum, and in the future, they will be even more serious about learning in order to build together a dream curriculum for the next generation.
4. For the curriculum developers, this research hoped that the results of this research could be useful as evaluation material for what needs to be improved and developed after seeing the challenges and benefits that the researcher examined about implementing the independent curriculum.